

The Doctrine of Marriage *vis a vis* Obstacles to a Godly Marriage

September 14, 2014



Synopsis: The doctrine of Marriage is as old as mankind. On that day that God made man, he made them male and female and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply. As marriage was the initial context for his relationship with God and his wife, it was at the heart of God's will for those whom he made in his own image. Marriage by its nature was community, love, service, joy and creation involving man (collective) and God, his creator, source and life. Marriage is a doctrine because it is the teaching of God's Word. His original blessing in marriage was a sign of his love and goodness to man, that doesn't change. The source of trial or evil that occurs in connection to marriage must neither lead us to blame God for this evil, nor to assume that because his original plans are made impossible by sin, we must compromise marriage to tweak it and make it something other than God instituted. Rather, we must continue to hearken back to God's Word to see both his original plan for marriage, and his forgiveness in Christ for us sinners who ruin this highest institution of God. In this we see that it is neither to Adam and Eve, nor to ancient or modern innovations to marriage, but to Christ and his relationship with us as sinners in the church (his Bride) that we must look in order to see the essence of God's plan for marriage in Christ's giving himself completely in order to redeem and restore his bride, which he presents to himself without spot or wrinkle.

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- I. God's Institution of Marriage (Genesis 1-2)
 - A. Creation or Evolution; what difference does it make? (Gen. 1)
 - B. Made in God's Image; What does this mean?
 - C. God's Commission of Adam and Eve, Husband and Wife, Father and Mother.
 - D. Order of Creation; Relationship of Husband and Wife. (Gen. 2)
 - E. Faithfulness; what does this mean? What's this got to do with Love? Divorce.
 - F. Parents and Children who marry; courtship; in-laws and out-laws.
 - G. The Marital Covenant: One Flesh. Sex, birth control, having children.
- II. Married, but fallen (Genesis 3)
 - A. The difference between Adam and Eve and us (overview of condition).
 - B. What's changed and why?
 1. The devil's dream, the devil's fall, the devil's plight.
 2. What was Eve's sin in the fall? Adam's? What "knowledge of good & evil" did they receive?
 3. The eye of the beholder. Fruit. Nakedness. God. His blessings. Spoiled by sin.
 - C. God's Word of curse on marriage because of sin.
 - D. Grace and the new promise.
- III. Christ and his bride the Church. Eph. 5.21f
 - A. The only perfect marriage is the gracious marriage of Christ and his bride the Church.
 - B. Each marriage blessed of God must be sanctified by Christ in his Church. Can a Christian marry a non-Christian? What about interdenominational marriages?
 - C. What will be the relationship of those married here in heaven?
- IV. Sinful man's advising God about Marriage.
 - A. Incest and the family of man.
 - B. Polygamy
 - C. Homosexuality
 - D. Living together / having sex before marriage.